

THE VALUE OF AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

Student Achievement **Academic:** High-quality afterschool programs have a proven track record of improving students' achievement in school.¹ Regular participation in high-quality afterschool programs is linked to significant gains in standardized test scores and work habits, improvements in school attendance as well as reductions in behavior problems among disadvantaged students.^{2, 3} Participation has also been linked to significantly higher graduation rates.^{4, 5, 6} These programs have a particularly strong impact on low-income and low-performing youth.⁷

Social and Emotional: By providing students with consistent enrichment activities such as music, art, sports, conflict resolution, cultural experiences, and other alternative ways of learning, afterschool learning improves students' social skills, gives them more confidence, creates higher educational and career aspirations, and motivates them to consistently attend school.⁸

Crime Prevention Violent juvenile crime is far more likely between the hours of 3:00 PM and 7:00 PM, and it is during these same hours that children are most likely to become victims of a crime.⁹ High-quality afterschool programs are endorsed by law enforcement organizations because they are effective in reducing violence, theft, vandalism, gang activity, and other adolescent crimes.¹⁰

Drug and Pregnancy Prevention Consistent participation in quality afterschool programs helps reduce the risk of youth experimenting with alcohol and other dangerous drugs, and teen pregnancy. Kids left alone in the hours afterschool are far more likely to engage in risky behaviors.¹¹

Childhood Obesity Prevention Afterschool programs have been identified by the Food Research and Action Council as effective venues for improving nutrition and physical activity.¹² A number of studies have shown that afterschool programs help to combat child obesity. For example, an *Applied Developmental Science* study showed that afterschool program participants in three elementary schools were significantly less likely to be obese after participating in the program.¹³

Cost-Effectiveness In an independent study conducted by the Rose Institute at Claremont McKenna College in 2002, researchers found that every dollar invested in high quality afterschool programs saves taxpayers roughly \$3.14.¹⁴ If benefits from crime reduction are factored in, each dollar invested in an at-risk child saves \$8-\$12.¹⁵

Working Families In a study of programs in New York City, parents said that afterschool programs helped them balance work and family life: 74 percent said they could more easily keep their job than before because of the program and 73 missed less work.¹⁶

Business Investment Afterschool programs prepare youth for today's workforce through providing academic enrichment and teaching skills not taught during the school day. Deloitte estimates that in 2014 companies spent \$70 billion on corporate learning, indicating a significant skill gap in the current crop of workers.¹⁷ According to the American Business Collaboration for Quality Dependant Care, "Companies view their investments in dependent care in the community not as charity, but as sound business practice."¹⁸

Public Support Eighty-four percent of parents surveyed in a poll by Afterschool Alliance support public funding for afterschool programs. Eighty-five percent support public funding for summer programs.¹⁹

Unmet Need Over 584,000 children are left alone and unsupervised in the hours after school in New York State, according to the Afterschool Alliance.²⁰

Further Reading

The Wallace Foundation, *Foundations for Young Adult Success: A Developmental Framework*, 2015

<http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/after-school/key-research/Documents/Foundations-for-Young-Adult-Success.pdf>.

Foundations for Young Adult Success, a report written by researchers at the University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research, advances our understanding of the structure of childhood learning outside of school. The researchers put forth a three pronged framework in which to think about the youth development: agency, integrated identity, and competencies.

The Afterschool Alliance, *America After 3 PM*, 2014

<http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM/>

“America After 3PM,” is the result of several years of research, spanning more than a decade of data and gives us a better sense of how youth are spending their time between the hours of 3 and 6PM.

Expanding Minds and Opportunities, February 2013

<http://www.expandinglearning.org/expandingminds/table-contents>.

This compendium of articles written by members of the afterschool field compiles the most up to date research, theory and firsthand accounts of the effects of afterschool, expanded learning and summer learning experiences.

Endnotes

1. The Afterschool Alliance, *Taking a Deeper Dive into Afterschool: Positive Outcomes and Promising Practices*, 2014, http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/Deeper_Dive_into_Afterschool.pdf.
2. *ibid.*
3. Advancement Project CA, *The Benefit of Afterschool Programs*, 2012, <http://www.advancementprojectca.org/sites/default/files/imce/Benefits%20of%20After%20School%20Programs%20-%20handout.pdf>
4. *ibid.*
5. The Afterschool Alliance, *Preventing Dropouts, the Important Role of Afterschool*, 2013, http://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/issue_briefs/issue_preventing_dropouts_60.pdf
6. Smink, Jay., *A Proven Solution for Dropout Prevention: Expanded Learning Opportunities*, Collaborative Communications Group, 2013.
7. The Expanding Learning and Afterschool Project, *Research Update: Afterschool Programs Close Achievement Gaps*, 2014, <http://expandinglearning.org/research/vandell/>.
8. J. Durlak et. al, ““A Meta-Analysis of After-School Programs That Seek to Promote Personal and Social Skills in Children and Adolescents,” *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 45, 2010, http://www.researchgate.net/publication/42346373_A_meta-analysis_of_after-school_programs_that_seek_to_promote_personal_and_social_skills_in_children_and_adolescents.
9. The Afterschool Alliance, *Keeping Kids Safe and Supported in the Hours After School*, May 2014, http://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/issue_briefs/issue_KeepingKidsSafe_65.pdf,
10. Advancement Project CA, *The Benefit of Afterschool Programs*.
11. *ibid.*
12. Ending Child Hunger By 2015: Strategies for Achieving the President’s Goals, *Food and Research Action Council*, <http://frac.org/initiatives/ending-child-hunger-by-2015/>.
13. Joseph L. Mahoney, Heather Lord & Erica Carryl (2005) Afterschool Program Participation and the Development of Child Obesity and Peer Acceptance, *Applied Developmental Science*, 9:4, 202-215, DOI: 10.1207/s1532480xads0904_3.
14. Brown et. Al., *The Costs and Benefits of After School Programs: The Estimated Effects of the After School Education and Safety Program Act of 2002*, The Rose Institute of Claremont-McKenna College, 2002.
15. *ibid.*
16. The Afterschool Alliance, *Afterschool Programs: Making a Difference in America’s Communities by Improving Academic Achievement, Keeping Kids Safe and Helping Working Families*, 2013, http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/Afterschool_Outcomes_2013.pdf.
17. Bersin, Josh, Spending on Corporate Training Soars: Employee Capabilities Now a Priority, *Forbes*, February 2, 2014, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/joshbersin/2014/02/04/the-recovery-arrives-corporate-training-spend-skyrockets/>
18. Corporate Voices for Working Families, *Why Business Cares About After School*, 2012, <http://community.ksde.org/Portals/42/download/General%20Documents/Why%20Business%20Cares%20About%20Afterschool.pdf>.
19. The Afterschool Alliance, *America After 3 PM*, 2014, http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/AA3PM-2014/AA3PM_National_Report.pdf.
20. Afterschool in New York: Facts and Research, *The Afterschool Alliance*, 2014, http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/policyStateFacts.cfm?state_abbr=NY.